

match the jobs with the skills needed for the job with the people who are looking for work, and that's a challenge. And that's something that I'm committed to doing.

A couple of other things that I want to say, now that I got you. *[Laughter]* There was a period of time in the seventies and eighties—I don't know if you remember this or not—when a lot of people doubted America, doubted whether we can compete. Do you remember that? The Japanese were going to be the predominate economy in the world, some would say, or the Germans would be. It was claimed that we weren't flexible enough. Our companies were—we had rigid rules, that the workers were not disciplined enough, that the American products really weren't good enough to compete. That's what a lot of people thought. Those were what we called the pessimists. And they were wrong. They were just flat wrong, obviously. I mean, America—we improved. We changed. We're flexible. Our education systems began to work better. The entrepreneurial spirit remained strong. We're the greatest economy in the world now, and it's important that we keep it that way with good policies.

The economy is vibrant today. There are still people who hurt and looking for work,

and that's why we've got to think about pro-growth, pro-entrepreneurial policies. We've got to be confident. But think about this. We sell computer chips to Japan. We produce BMWs in Greer, South Carolina, for export to Germany. We're exporting California wine to France. *[Laughter]* And we're selling Mexican food to Mexico.

The role of Government is to get policies in place that encourage growth, that enhance the spirit of ownership and rely upon the American people. It's a safe bet, when we get the policies right, things will be great here in America, because you know why? The American people are great. This country is full of people—our country is full of people who can rise to the challenge. Many people want to own something and, therefore, are willing to work for it—responsible, honorable, decent citizens who love their family, love their communities, and love their country. And it's a privilege to be the President of such a grand nation.

Thank you for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:45 p.m. at the Renaissance Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Massey Villarreal, member, board of directors, U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

## Remarks at the Radio and Television Correspondents' Association Dinner March 24, 2004

Thank you. Thanks for inviting me—finally. *[Laughter]* And thank you for honoring David Bloom. It was a fantastic speech you gave for a man you loved.

I am sorry Laura couldn't be here, and I'm sorry Secretary Rumsfeld is not here either. The guy constantly surprises me. Do you know what Rummy's favorite TV show is? "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy." *[Laughter]* My Cabinet could take some pointers from watching that show. In fact,

I'm going to have the Fab Five do a make over on Ashcroft. *[Laughter]*

Anyway, it's nice to be with you. A couple of years ago when I was here, I read from my book of "Misarticalations." *[Laughter]* Fortunately, my verbal phonation and electrocution—*[laughter]*—have improved. So tonight I'm going to do one of my slide shows. These are actual, unstaged photos pulled from the files of the White House Photo Office. So, ladies

and gentlemen, I present a White House election-year album.

As you know, the contest with my opponent is going to be a slugfest. I'm feeling good. [Laughter] I'm feeling ready. [Laughter] I'm psyching myself up for the fight. [Laughter]

I knew it was going to be a tough campaign when Karl Rove started dressing like this. [Laughter]

And this is Condi Rice, of course. Here I am trying to explain John Kerry's foreign policy. [Laughter]

I have to admit it really ticked me off when Democrats questioned my National Guard service in Alabama. Here's a photo proving that I was in Alabama fulfilling my duties. [Laughter]

Political campaigns always have their unexpected moments. This next photo is when I heard that Senator McCain said he was considering being Kerry's runningmate. [Laughter]

The next one was taken a couple of months ago. I had just gotten word that Howard Dean had lost Iowa. [Laughter]

In addition to campaign calls, I also spend a lot of time on the phone listening to our European allies. [Laughter] The conversation went like this: "Hey, John, Kim Chong-il here." [Laughter] "Just wanted to call and let you know, you're my guy." [Laughter]

Those weapons of mass destruction have got to be somewhere. [Laughter]

As you can tell from the look on Andy Card's face, we've become a little concerned about the Vice President lately. [Laughter] Whenever you ask him a question, he replies, "Let's see what my little friend says." [Laughter]

But we get along well. Here I am saying, "Dick, if the Hunan Palace doesn't get lunch here in 4 minutes, we're going out." [Laughter]

Nope, no weapons over there. [Laughter] Maybe under here. [Laughter]

Oops, this photo wasn't supposed to be in here. This is the Skull and Bones secret signal. [Laughter]

I'm not paranoid. But it was at this point in my Presidency that I had a strange feeling somebody was following me. [Laughter]

One thing about being President is you get lots of advice. "Yes, Mother." [Laughter]

"Yes, Mother." [Laughter]

"Mother, would you just listen to us for once." [Laughter]

I like this next picture a lot. It's hard to get Rumsfeld to laugh, but when he does, boy, it is worth it. [Laughter]

This photo was taken down at the ranch, and as you can tell, Barney is not very happy with me. This is the day I told him he'd been neutered. [Laughter]

And this is the day that Barney got his revenge. [Laughter]

Now, on long flights, the staff and I often play cards. The key to playing poker is keeping a straight face and never letting your opponent know what you're thinking. [Laughter] Actually, this is on the way to the G-8 summit. Once I got these trading cards, it's easy to remember the names of the foreign leaders. [Laughter]

All Presidents have dreams and aspirations of what their legacy will be. Here they are measuring me for Mount Rushmore. [Laughter]

But I do have a few serious photos to show you, in closing. It's photos like these that mean the most to me.

Some of our Special Forces sent me this last picture. The faces are blurred in the slide because they remain in harm's way. The photo hangs in my private study next to the Oval Office. To honor those who died on September the 11th and to make a statement of their own commitment to this country's security, these Americans buried a piece of the World Trade Center in a place in Afghanistan where the Al Qaida once ran free. They wrote that they held a ceremony, which was far more emotional than they had expected. The team

leader wrote a prayer and a dedication. Let me read you one sentence from that dedication: “We consecrate this spot as an everlasting memorial to the brave Americans who died on September the 11th, so that all who would seek to do her harm will know that America will not stand by and watch terror prevail.”

We will not stand by. The greatest honor of being President is leading such men and

women. We have the freedom we enjoy tonight because they protect that freedom. And may God protect them.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:55 p.m. at the Washington Hilton Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to former Democratic Presidential candidate Howard Dean; and Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea.

### Message to the Congress Transmitting a Notice of Intention To Enter Into a Free Trade Agreement With the Dominican Republic *March 24, 2004*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Consistent with section 2105(a)(1)(A) of the Trade Act of 2002 (Public Law 107–210; the “Trade Act”), I am pleased to notify the Congress of my intent to enter into a free trade agreement (FTA) with the Government of the Dominican Republic.

This agreement will create new opportunities for America’s workers, farmers, businesses, and consumers by eliminating barriers to trade with the Dominican Republic, the largest economy in the Caribbean Basin. At the same time, it will help bring to the Dominican Republic expanded economic freedom and opportunity, and it will provide an opportunity for regional stability, democracy, and economic development through closer ties of commerce, investment, and friendship.

Consistent with the Trade Act, I am sending this notification at least 90 days in advance of entering into an agreement with the Dominican Republic. My Administration looks forward to working with the Congress in developing appropriate legislation to approve and implement this free trade agreement.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

March 24, 2004.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 25. The notice of March 24 is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

### Remarks in a Discussion on Job Training and the Economy in Nashua, New Hampshire *March 25, 2004*

*Lucille Jordan.* Mr. President, on behalf of the faculty, the administration, the students, and the great citizens of the great State of New Hampshire, I’d like to wel-

come you to our campus. Mr. President, thank you.

*The President.* Lucille, thanks. Thank you all. Thanks for having me.